

①

authorize construction of a designated utility corridor for possible use in the future by utilities. For these reasons, full review of GLB's project under Section 10901 is warranted.

During the EIS process, farmland data for the proposed GLB rail and utility corridor area should be collected from many agencies including the NRCS, U.S. Geological Survey, and the USDA Soil Survey Geographic Database. This information should include the location of farmland, types of land cover, agricultural use (row crops, hay, etc.), and acreage of farmland enrolled in federally or state protected farming programs such as the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP).

Here's what and how the STB will review the impact of GLB on farmland

Agricultural impacts of the proposed GLB and Utility Corridor for the Area must be determined by identifying the total number of acres of farmland that would be converted to a different use, determining the acres of prime farmland within the converted farmland being impacted, estimating the number of agriculture parcel severances, and determining the potential in crop production and cash receipts. Agricultural severances, uneconomical remnants, and landlocked parcels must be determined as well.

Definitions:

A **severed farm parcel** is defined as a parcel of farmland that is traversed by the proposed project, resulting in dividing one larger parcel of land into two smaller parcels. The owner/operator is inconvenienced by farming two smaller parcels instead of one larger parcel of land. In addition, the severance may cause adverse travel for owners/operators compared to the distance traveled without the proposed project.

If roads are closed.
A **landlocked parcel** is defined as land that is isolated by the proposed roadway corridor footprint in a way that the parcel becomes inaccessible to the current owner/operator due to lack of access from a public road, existing easement, adjacent property under the same ownership, or access road.

An **uneconomical remnant** is defined as farmland that is severed from a larger parcel of farmland that is too small to be economically or practically farmed by the existing owner/operator. For example, the Illinois Department of Agriculture (DOA) identifies a stating frame of reference for uneconomical remnants as three acres or less in size, but this may vary depending on the shape of the remnant and the concerns of the owner/operator.

Adverse travel is defined as the length of additional distance, round trip, an owner/operator would have to travel in order to operate a parcel that has become severed or is otherwise affected as a result of the proposed project. Adverse travel results in additional time and fuel expense that would not be required to operate one continuous parcel.

Relocated farmsteads include residences with farm buildings that require relocation of the residence. An agribusiness is a business related to agricultural production and includes production, supply, distribution, processing, marketing, and sales of agriculturally related products.

Analysis by the NRCS is required for projects like the GLB rail and utility corridor that plan to convert farmland to other uses under the Farmland Protection Policy Act. The NRCS evaluates the quality and productivity of the soils that will be affected, while the Illinois Department of

2

ulture (DOA) evaluates project impacts. In Illinois, the evaluation uses the Illinois Land
ation and Site Assessment (LESA) system, which takes into account:

- Amount of agricultural land required;
- Location of the proposed project;
- Acres of off-site agricultural land required for borrow material;
- Acres of prime and important farmland required for mitigation;
- Creation of severed farm parcels, uneconomical remnants, landlocked parcels, and adverse travel;
- Relocations of rural residences and farm buildings; and
- Utilization of minimum design standards.

inois LESA scoring system operates on a point basis. The higher the LESA score, the more
e the farmland is for long-term agricultural use. A score of 0 to 175 points indicates a low
; for protection; a score of 176 to 225 points indicates a moderate rating for protection; and
re of 226 to 300 points indicates that the land should be retained as agricultural land and
ternative alignment should be considered.

**e providing comment to the STB, landowners should review GLB's Route Narrative and the
of the proposed route to determine how the project will impact their farming operations. In
ion to other issues discussed above, Landowners should also comment on the following
of potential impacts on their farmland:**

- How much of my farm will be impacted (acres)? *40 acres*
- Do you have Prime or important soils that will be impacted? Highly erodible soils? *yes*
- Will your home be relocated? *no*
- Will you have to relocate farm buildings? *no*
- Will your farm be severed? How will private crossing impact farming operations? *yes, greatly*
- Will your farm be landlocked? *If roads are closed.*
- Will you suffer from adverse travel? If yes, are alternate routes safe? Adequate? *yes, need a rail Crossing*
- How will your tile and surface drainage be impacted? *Greatly*
- o Cut and/or crushed field tiles? *yes, causing wet lands*
 - o Construction will result in compaction that impacts drainage and crop loss *yes*
 - o Flyovers and grade crossings will impact drainage on farmland and drainage ditches
- Do you have land in CRP or other conservation easements? *yes*
- Do you have livestock operations that will be impacted? *my building renters, have many animals*
- Will the project create an uneconomical remnant on your parcel? *yes*
- Will the project impact irrigation on your farm?
- Do you have a wind turbine or wind farm lease that will be impacted? *yes*
- Do you have mineral rights or a mineral lease that may be impacted?
- How will road closures impact your farming operation? *Greatly*
- o Adverse Travel? *yes*
 - o Impact emergency services? *yes*
- Is your farm in an Ag Use Area? *yes*
- Designated Historical Area? Designated Centennial/Sesquicentennial Farm? Tribal *no*
ground?
- Federal Flood Plain Designations? *no*
- Wetland designation? *no*
- Impact of flyovers, at grade crossings on ability to safely accommodate travel of farm *yes*
equipment?

Dear Dave Havecky, Surface Transportation Board
Docket No. FD 35952
395 E Street, Washington, DC 20433-0001

I am Walter S. Mikrut and my farm is 4 miles north of Capron, IL. Take Capron Road to Randall Road then West $\frac{1}{2}$ mile. My farm is the north side a 120 acre rectangle. My family owned it since 1939.

I don't want a Railroad parting my land. I am contracted with Mainstream Wind Farms for 2 large turbines at the North end of my farm. You might have to contact Mainstream. I have tiles running to the stream that runs through my farm. The train crushing those tiles would turn my land to a Wet Land, unrentable. I have land in CRP now and another grass waterway besides. I don't want my land severed. It would make it very difficult for my land renter, Les Hullah. I might be agreeable to running the rails along my West property line or even on it, if the neighbor is agreeable. You are bending the tracks anyway just bend them a little sooner. There is a flowing spring on the track line right near Randall Rd. It watered the cows & horses, since we owned the farm. Please move the tracks West to the Property line.

Walter Mikrut Harvard, IL 60033
405 S. Ayer St. 815-943-4146



Mr. Walter Mikrut
405 S. Ayer St.
Harvard, IL 60033-2812

CAROL STREAM IL 601

05 APR 2016 PM 7:1



Dave Kovecky
Surface Transportation Board
Docket No. FD 35952
395 E Street SW, Washington, DC
20423-0001

204230001

